

Bayonet! Forward!



240TH Engineer Group Newsletter

1 April 2006 -15 April 2006

The Trip to Afghanistan

Following the validation and farewell ceremonies, we continued with the next phase of packing our personal gear on the tractor trailer. Officers and enlisted soldiers worked together to complete the task.



Soldiers loading their personal gear



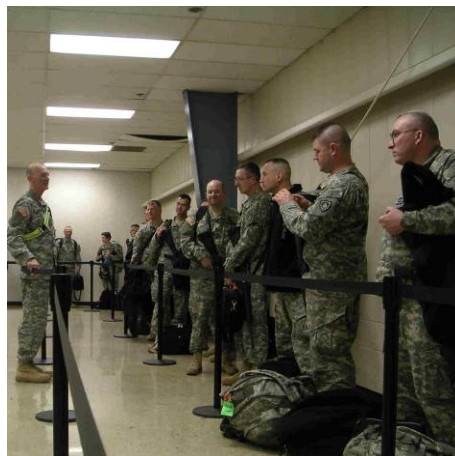
MG Libby has a heart to heart conversation with some of the enlisted soldiers before we got on the busses.

Several of us had the opportunity to spend at least a few minutes getting to know the Adjutant General.



Last formation in Indiana

ISG Bernard checks the list, calls the role and makes sure no one is left behind. After living at Camp Atterbury for over two months, the day had finally arrived when we had our last formation before boarding the bus and heading for the airport.



Soldiers lining up for the plane in Indiana



The load team transfers personal gear on the transport vehicle

Once we arrived in Afghanistan, we hit the ground running. Several soldiers went on convoys and began to fulfill our mission.



Major Weston, LTC Russ (from the 18th BDE), Chaplain Gibson, and translator "Softy" present the village of Molla with humanitarian aid.



Girls' school foundation

We were in this village as well as the neighboring village to build a boys' school, a girls' school, an irrigation holding tank, and to bring lights to two mosques. Our civil affairs element spent time interacting with the local population establishing a good rapport.



Irrigated Fields in Afghanistan

The village is nestled in the mountains, far from most resources. There is no electricity and no indoor plumbing, but the beauty of the irrigated fields and the towering mountains all around make you forget the austerity. For literally thousands of years, these people have harnessed the river that runs through the village and have created homes for their families. The people were extremely friendly and extremely grateful for all that we are doing for them and for their country.



MAJ Weston with village elder



SFC Grimshaw with local nationals



Chaplain Gibson interacts with some of the locals while others look on



SPC Paradis enjoys a few moments with some children



MSG Smith smiles for the camera with members of an Afghan family



LTC Corbett with children

As we arrived in Molla, children started appearing out of no where. They know that when the Americans show up they bring goodies. We didn't disappoint them. They love pens! In the picture we are actually standing in a river bed, its wide open and flat. You can see their village in the background. In front of us are several terraced gardens full of onions. We dropped off supplies, goodies and toured the Civil-Military projects we support in town. The two major projects are a 9-room girls' school and large water holding tanks for their irrigation system. A great day!

There will be additional pictures located at the Group's website at the following address:

http://www.me.ngb.army.mil/Family/Family_Pages/240th/default.htm

The mailing address for letters and packages has changed a bit. It is now:

Soldier's Name without rank
240th Engineer Group
APO AE 09354

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